

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 05215 181020Z
ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 /036 W
-----069141 190219Z /64

R 180928Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2650
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5215

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, TU, UK
SUBJ: BIO INFO ON NEW TURKISH CONSUL GENERAL IN LONDON,
YUKSEL SOYLEMEZ

REF: TURKEY PLBRL

1. THE ASSIGNMENT OF YUKSEL SOYLEMEZ (YEWK-SELL SUYH-LEH-MEHZ) TO LONDON AS CONSUL GENERAL SEEMS A STRANGE USE OF ONE OF TURKEY'S TOP UN SPECIALISTS. IT WILL, HOWEVER, GIVE LONDON ONE OF TURKEY'S MOST EXTRAORDINARY DIPLOMATS, A VIRTUAL RENAISSANCE MAN WHO IS NOT ONLY EXTREMELY CAPABLE IN HIS PRIMARY PROFESSION BUT ALSO THE AUTHOR OF TWO BOOKS OF POETRY AND A TWO-VOLUME STUDY OF "FOREIGN POLICY OF TURKEY AT THE UN", AND A PAINTER WHO HAS EXHIBITED AROUND THE WORLD. (A TURKISH PRIMARY SCHOOL BEARING HIS NAME WAS EXPANDED WITH FUNDS FROM A NEW YORK CHARITY EXHIBIT IN WHICH HE PARTICIPATED.)

2. BORN IN ISTANBUL IN 1931 AND A GRADUATE OF THE ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY LAW FACULTY, SOYLEMEZ ENTERED THE MFA IN 1957. LONDON WAS HIS FIRST POST, FOLLOWED BY NEW DELHI AND BANGKOK. FOR THE LAST 12 YEARS HE HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WORK, FIRST AS COUNSELOR IN THE TURKISH UN MISSION AT NEW YORK, 1966-71, AND SINCE THEN AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND (SINCE 1974) DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL
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ORGANIZATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE MFA. HE HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE TURKISH DEL TO ALL UNGA MEETINGS SINCE 1971. SINCE HIS DEPARTMENT ALSO HOLDS RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAW OF THE SEA AND NARCOTICS, HE HAS PARTICIPATED IN A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS ON THOSE SUBJECTS, AND HAS REPRESENTED TURKEY IN A NUMBER OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE OVER THE AEGEAN SEABED AND AIRSPECA DISPUTES.

3. ALTHOUGH HE IS FRIENDLY AND WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD THE US, WE HAVE FOUND SOYLEMEZ A VERY TOUGH NEGOTIATOR. WHILE ABLE TO JOKE ABOUT TWO SIDES' GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF NEGOTIATING WHILE HOLDING RIGID POSITIONS, HE GIVES NO GROUND UNTIL HE SEES A WILLINGNESS TO DO SO ON THE OTHER SIDE. TWO OF HIS PARTICULAR STRENGTHS ARE AN EXCEPTIONAL COMMAND OF ENGLISH AND A HIGHLY RETENTIVE MEMORY. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE IMPRESSES SOME AS PUTTING UP TOO MUCH SHOW AND TOO MUCH OF A FRONT. WHILE HE WILLINGLY AND ACCURATELY EXPLAINS THE TURKISH POSITION ON A PROBLEM, HE ERRS ON THE SIDE OF DISCRETION IN PROVIDING INFORMATION, WITH THE RESULT THAT OUTSIDERS MAY NOT ADEQUATELY UNDERSTAND WHAT THE GOAL IS DOING IN HIS AREA.

4. URBANE, LIVELY, CHARMING, A STYLISH DRESSER, SOYLEMEZ IS ALWAYS AN ASSET IN SOCIAL GATHERINGS. AT COCKTAIL PARTIES, GROUPS FREQUENTLY GATHER AROUND HIM. HE HAS SPENT SO MUCH TIME IN NEW YORK, HE SAYS, THAT HE CONSIDERS HIMSELF HALF A NEW YORKER.

5. THE MFA NOMINATED SOYLEMEZ IN 1976 FOR THE POSITION OF UN CHIEF OF PROTOCOL. WHILE WE BELIEVED HE WAS AN EXCELLENT CANDIDATE, HE DID NOT GET THE JOB.

6. HIS WIFE, WHILE NOT MATCHING HIS EXUBERANCE, IS INTEL-
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LIGENT AND PLEASANT, AND SHE SPEAKS ENGLISH WELL.

7. WE BELIEVE SOYLEMEZ WILL ARRIVE IN LONDON IN LATE AUGUST. SINCE HE IS ON OUR POTENTIAL LEADERS BIOGRAPHIC REPORTING LIST, WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR INFORMATION ON HIS TOUR IN LONDON.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSULS GENERAL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ANKARA05215
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780295-0816
Format: TEL
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780750/aaaabpuj.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1980176
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIO INFO ON NEW TURKISH CONSUL GENERAL IN LONDON, YUKSEL SOYLEMEZ
TAGS: PINR, TU, UK, (SOYLEMEZ, YUKSEL)
To: LONDON
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b7e8f071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014